

Section 319(h) – Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Financial Assistance Program - Watershed-Based Planning

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Opportunity Information

CSFA Number 532-60-0378

CSFA Popular Name Section 319(h) Grant Program

Title Section 319(h) – Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Financial Assistance Program - Watershed-Based Planning

Description The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Illinois EPA) is seeking proposals for watershed-based planning projects (Projects) to address nonpoint source (NPS) pollution to prevent, eliminate, or reduce water quality impairments to Illinois' surface and groundwater resources. The Illinois EPA receives federal funds from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) through Section 319(h) of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. § 1329(h)) to help implement the Section 319(h) Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Financial Assistance Program (a.k.a. Section 319(h) Grant Program) (<https://www2.illinois.gov/epa/topics/water-quality/watershed-management/nonpoint-sources/Pages/section-319.aspx>). Specifically, to implement performance measures as outlined in Chapter 7 (Short and Medium-Term Objectives and Milestones) in the Illinois' Nonpoint Source Management Program (INPSMP) (Illinois EPA, 2013) (<https://www2.illinois.gov/epa/topics/water-quality/watershed-management/nonpoint-sources/Documents/NPS-Management-Program.pdf>).

NPS pollution is caused by rainfall or snowmelt moving over and through the ground. As the runoff moves, it picks up and carries away natural and human-made pollutants, finally

depositing them into lakes, rivers, wetlands and groundwater. It has been determined that over 60% of the (national) documented water pollution problem can be traced to nonpoint sources.

The applicant must describe the expected outcomes of the Project in terms of NPS pollution control for surface and/or groundwater quality improvement. The outcomes are the important changes that are to be set in motion or supported by the Project. These changes may be environmental or social and may be expected to appear on different time scales.

Examples of watershed-based planning projects and activities that have been funded through the Section 319 Grant Program are listed below. The list is not all-inclusive, and inclusion of a project or activity does not equate to an automatic eligibility for funding under the NOFO.

- Development of a watershed-based plan;
- Update of an existing watershed plan;
- Plans described above may include one or more of the following:
 - Technical assistance for NPS water pollution control;
 - Environmental and social indicator monitoring to help document the need for NPS water pollution control; and
 - Education and outreach to promote awareness and implementation of activities that may help to restore degraded waters or protect waters from degradation due to NPS pollution.

For additional information on watershed-based planning, please refer to Appendix C of the Nonpoint Source Program and Grants Guidelines for States and Territories (April 12, 2013) (<https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2015-09/documents/319-guidelines-fy14.pdf>) and the Guidance for Developing Watershed Action Plans in Illinois (Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, 2007) (<https://www2.illinois.gov/epa/topics/water-quality/watershed-management/Documents/Watershed-Action-Plan-Guidance.pdf>).

Illinois EPA will rank the applications according to the criteria outlined in the Evaluation section. Grants will be awarded to the applicants that propose the most cost-effective Projects with the largest potential for NPS pollution control. Applications that meet a minimum cut score (outlined in the Evaluation section) will receive additional points for Projects located within an Illinois EPA priority watershed, an Environmental Justice area and/or existing TMDL.

Awarding Agency Name	Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
Agency Contact Name	Christine Davis

Agency Contact Phone	217-782-3362
Agency Contact Email	epa.bowgrants@illinois.gov
Fund Activity Categories	Environmental Quality
Category Explanation	Illinois EPA's Section 319(h) Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Financial Assistance Program (a.k.a. Section 319(h) Grant Program) is designed to provide grant funds for Projects that prevent, eliminate, or reduce water quality impairments caused by NPS pollution.
Opportunity Manager	Christine Davis
Announcement Type	Initial Announcement
Funding Opportunity Number	378-2420
Assistance Listings Number	66.460
Public Link	https://il.amplifund.com/Public/Opportunities/Details/3792367f-415b-47de-a9db-eed15ee400c0
Is Published	No

Funding Information

Funding Sources	Federal Or Federal Pass Through, State
Funding Source Description	<p>This grant award is utilizing State and federal pass-through funds. The federal pass-through funds are received from U.S. EPA and distributed by Illinois EPA under Section 319(h) of the Clean Water Act. Illinois EPA expects to award a total of up to \$750,000 and anticipates distributing this amount across two (2) to four (4) projects. The actual amount depends upon the final U.S. EPA budget approved by Congress and the allocation awarded to Illinois by U.S. EPA. The Section 319(h) Grant Program does not have a set maximum or minimum total project cost or grant amount. However, in the past, Projects have had total project costs that generally ranged from \$80,000 to \$230,000 and grant assistance has generally ranged from \$48,000 to \$138,000. No more than 50% of the funds, per funding cycle, shall be allocated to any one applicant or project.</p>

The Section 319(h) Grant Program is a reimbursement program. The Grantee must perform the work, pay Project costs, and submit an invoice with supporting documentation before Illinois EPA will reimburse the Grantee for any approved eligible costs. Illinois EPA shall only make reimbursements to the Grantee and shall reimburse the Grantee no more frequently than monthly.

The Illinois EPA may elect to partially fund an application by funding discrete portions or phases of the Project scope of work. This could be due to ineligible (e.g., proposed monitoring without an approved QAPP) or low priority components identified in the application or inadequate funds available to complete the entire Project.

The Section 319(h) Grant Program may provide up to 60% of the approved Project costs. The remainder, normally 40%, is the responsibility of the Grantee and constitutes the match. The Grantee must document the required match at, or before, the time of invoice for reimbursement. Match may include money spent or in-kind services utilized to complete the approved Project tasks. Match cannot be federal funds or funds used to match another federal program. Match can be provided by the Grantee, a sub-contractor, or Project partners (e.g., State programs, private foundations, landowners). A Grantee may match greater than 40%.

If an applicant wants to use a grant from another funding agency as match, the applicant should check with that funding agency issuing the grant to ensure that it may be used as match for the Section 319(h) Grant Program. The following applies when using other grants to match the Section 319(h) Grant Program:

- The matching grant scope of work must directly satisfy a portion of the Section 319(h) Grant Program scope of work
- The date that the Grantee incurs costs for the matching grant must fall within the effective and expiration dates of the Section 319(h) Grant Program grant agreement
- The costs incurred under the matching grant must be eligible according to the Section 319(h) Grant Program criteria

Award Information

Award Type Competitive

Expected Number of Awards 4

Indirect Costs Allowed Yes

Indirect Cost Description In order to charge indirect costs to a grant, the Grantee must have an annually negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA). There are three types of NICRAs:

1. Federally Negotiated Rate. Organizations that receive direct federal funding may have an indirect cost rate that was negotiated with the Federal Cognizant Agency. The State of Illinois will accept the federally negotiated rate. The applicant must provide a copy of the federally-negotiated NICRA.
2. State Negotiated Rate. The applicant must negotiate an indirect cost rate with the State of Illinois if they do not have a Federally Negotiated Rate or elect NOT to use the De Minimis Rate. The indirect cost rate proposal must be submitted to the State of Illinois within 90 days of the Notice of State Award.
3. De Minimis Rate. An organization that has never received a Federally Negotiated Rate may elect a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct cost (MTDC). Once established, the de minimis rate may be used indefinitely. The State of Illinois must verify the calculation of the MTDC annually in order to accept the de minimis rate.

An applicant has the discretion not to claim payment for indirect costs. Applicants that elect not to claim indirect costs cannot be reimbursed for indirect costs.

Restrictions on Indirect Costs No

Matching Requirement Yes

Submission Information

Submission Timeline Type One Time

Submission Open Date 10/21/2022 12:00 PM Central Standard Time

Submission Close Date 12/7/2022 12:00 PM Central Standard Time

Submission Timeline Additional Information The Illinois EPA shall not extend the application deadline date. Incomplete applications shall not be considered for funding, and preclude the Illinois EPA from making an award to the applicant.

Allow Multiple Applications Yes

Technical Assistance Session

Technical Assistance Session Yes

Session Date and Time 11/2/2022 1:30 PM

Conference Info / Registration Link <https://illinois.webex.com/illinois/j.php?MTID=m20d48817e89bfb44a0354790b1ef8c5b>

Eligibility Information

Eligibility Type Public

Eligible Applicants Government Organizations, Nonprofit Organizations, Education Organizations, Public Housing Organizations, For-Profit Organizations, Small Businesses, Individuals, Others

Additional Eligibility Information Section 319(h) Grant Program funds are available to any entity that has legal status to accept funds from the State of Illinois. This can include: local watershed groups; land conservancies or trusts; public and private profit and nonprofit organizations and institutions; units of county, municipal, township, and state governments; universities and colleges; park districts and other local land managing agencies; soil and water conservation districts; conservation organizations; and others.

Section 319(h) Grant Program applicants must have the financial ability to initiate the project, pay expenses, and then request reimbursement from the Illinois EPA, while continuing to finance their normal operating expenses.

Applicants must have the authority and ability to implement the proposed project, or propose to subcontract portions of the project to the appropriate entities for implementation.

Match is required. See the Funding Information Section for more information.

Applicants may only apply for a grant through the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) Grantee Portal, www.grants.illinois.gov. During GATA Portal pre-qualification, Dun and Bradstreet verifications are performed including a check of Debarred and Suspended status and good standing with the Secretary of State. The pre-qualification process also includes a financial and administrative

risk assessment utilizing an Internal Controls Questionnaire. If applicable, the applicant will be notified that it is ineligible for award as a result of the Dun and Bradstreet verification. The applicant will be informed of corrective action needed to become eligible for a grant award.

The requirements of the U.S. EPA Guidance for Management of Section 319(h) Grant Program Funds apply to all recipients of grants made with funds appropriated by Congress under Section 319(h) of the CWA.

The following activities are not eligible for Section 319(h) Grant Program watershed-based planning funds:

- Watershed-Based Planning activities that do not address water quality through NPS pollution control.
- Implementation of best management practices.
- Ineligible activities specified in the current U.S. EPA guidelines for Section 319(h) grants.

A Project's failure to meet an eligibility criterion will preclude the Illinois EPA from making a Section 319(h) Grant Program award for that application.

There is no limit on the number of applications an applicant may submit under this announcement.

Applications for renewal or supplementation of existing projects are eligible to compete with applications for new grant awards.

Administrative Criteria

If the answer to any of the following Administrative Criterion questions is No, the application shall not be considered for funding.

Did the applicant meet all of the following requirements for Merit-Based Review eligibility?

- 1) All Section 319(h) Grant Program – Project Details completed with support documentation (i.e., maps), as appropriate
- 2) Included a QAPP, if applicable

Additional Information

Additional Information URL <https://www2.illinois.gov/epa/topics/water-quality/watershed-management/nonpoint-sources/Pages/default.aspx>

Additional Information URL Description Additional information about Section 319(h) can be found on Illinois EPA's NPS webpage. Check out the Illinois' Nonpoint Source Management Program and

the Section 319(h) Biannual Report, which describes the projects that have been funded in the past under the Section 319(h) Grant Program.

Environmental or social indicator monitoring is not required in order to qualify for the Section 319(h) Grant Program.

Illinois EPA has the right to use (including, but not limited to, citing, circulating, displaying, and reproducing) all products that result from the Grantee receiving financial assistance under the grant agreement whether the product is developed by the Grantee or a sub-grantee.

Illinois EPA is not obligated to make any grant award as a result of this NOFO.

Award Administration Information

State Award Notices The Illinois EPA shall issue a Notice of State Award (NOSA) to the successful grant applicants. The NOSA shall specify the funding terms and specific conditions resulting from the Fiscal and Administrative and Programmatic Risk Assessments. The NOSA must be accepted by an authorized representative of the grant applicant before a grant agreement can be sent to the applicant. A NOSA is not an authorization to begin project activities or incur costs.

Administrative and National Policy Requirements The terms and conditions of the award shall be specified in the NOSA and the grant agreement.

No grantee shall receive a grant or any other State or federal assistance that would provide more than 100 percent of the eligible project costs.

Each grantee must agree to comply with all applicable federal and State requirements. This includes Uniform Administrative Requirements, 2 C.F.R. § 200, Executive Order 12372 “Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs”, and GATA. These can have a significant impact on the costs and complexity of a project. The Section 319(h) Grant Program Grantees will be expected to submit signed assurances that they will comply with all federal mandates, including:

a) Business Enterprise Program for Minorities, Females, and Person with Disabilities Act; 30 ILCS 575/: For grant awards of \$250,000 or more, the grantee will be required to comply with the Business Enterprise Program for Minorities, Females, and Persons with Disabilities Act, which establishes a

goal for contracting with businesses that have been certified as owned and controlled by persons who are minority, female, or who have disabilities. The grantee must document a plan for compliance prior to the establishment of the grant agreement and ensure compliance through the life of the grant.

Successful applicants will be required to execute a formal grant agreement and adhere to all requirements of the Section 319 Grant Program and other State and federal contractual requirements. In the grant agreement, the grantee shall be required to:

- Certify that it does and shall comply with all provisions of the federal Internal Revenue Code (26 USC 1), the Illinois Income Tax Act; (35 ILCS 5/), and all rules promulgated thereunder, including withholding provisions and timely deposits of employee taxes and unemployment insurance taxes.
- Certify that it does and shall comply with the reporting requirements of the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006; PL 109-282, September 26, 2006, 120 Stat 1186 with respect to federal Awards greater than or equal to \$25,000.
- Certify that it shall adhere to the applicable Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements, which are published in Title 2, Part 200 of the Code of Federal Regulations, and are incorporated herein by reference. See 44 Ill. Adm. Code 7000.30(b)(1)(A).
- Certify that it and its sub-grantees shall: (i) be registered with the federal SAM if seeking an Award that is partially or fully paid by federal funds and registered with the State equivalent of SAM; (ii) be in good standing with the Illinois Secretary of State; and (iii) have a valid DUNS number. It is Grantee's responsibility to remain current with these registrations and requirements. If Grantee's status with regard to any of these requirements change, or the certifications made in and information provided in the Uniform Grant Application changes, Grantee's must notify the Grantor.
- Submit personnel activity reports accounting on an after-the-fact basis for 100% of the employee's actual time, separately indicating the time spent on the Section 319(h) grant, other grants or projects, vacation or sick leave, and administrative time, if applicable.

Reporting All projects require quarterly reporting of progress.

Quarterly progress reports shall include both a Periodic Financial Report and a Periodic Performance Report.

All projects require a final project report. The grantee shall submit to the Illinois EPA, by the date specified in the grant agreement, a report explaining the execution of the project and evaluating the project's success. The report shall document the project tasks and summarize the findings, costs, and benefits of the project.

State Awarding Agency Contacts

If you have any programmatic questions regarding the Section 319 Grant Program, this NOFO, or the Section 319 Grant Program application, contact the Illinois EPA's Nonpoint Source Unit staff at:

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
Bureau of Water, WMS, NPS Unit #15
1021 North Grand Avenue East; P.O. Box 19276
Springfield, Illinois 62794-9276
Email: epa.bowgrants@illinois.gov
Phone: (217) 782-3362

If you have any fiscal and administrative questions regarding the Uniform Grant Application, the Uniform Grant Budget Template, Indirect Cost Rates, Internal Controls Questionnaire (ICQ), or pre-qualifying through the GATA Grantee Portal, contact the Illinois EPA's Fiscal staff at:

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency Fiscal
1021 North Grand Avenue East; P.O. Box 19276
Springfield, Illinois 62794-9276
Email: Max.Paller@illinois.gov
Phone: (217) 558-3386

Other Information

Additional information about Illinois' Nonpoint Source Management Program can be found on Illinois EPA's website, including the Section 319(h) Biannual Report, which describes the projects that have been funded in the past under the Section 319(h) Grant Program.

Illinois EPA is not obligated to make any grant award as a result of this NOFO.

In the event that a grant award is not fully spent within the grant period, or the project is terminated, Illinois EPA reserves the right to use those unspent funds for another Notice of Funding Opportunity.

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Criteria

All Section 319 Grant Program applications shall be reviewed for completeness, technical merit, cost effectiveness, and adherence to the Clean Water Act, U.S. EPA Section 319 program guidance, and the competitive grant evaluation criteria described in this NOFO. Applications found to be complete shall undergo a comprehensive, merit-based review performed in compliance with GATA Legislation 30 ILCS 708 and Uniform Administrative Requirements; 2 CFR § 200. The merit-based review is designed to evaluate applications against the following criteria:

Tier 1

General Quality of Application (0 – 10 points)

- All required components are submitted and complete
- Project information submitted is sufficient for evaluation, consistent, and correct

Quality of Proposal (0 – 20 points)

- Project is consistent with the intent of the NOFO
- The application identifies steps to implement the Project and provides clear Project goals and measurable objectives needed to achieve the expected outputs and outcomes
- Timeline is appropriate for the tasks and milestones outlined
 - Project can be completed in two (2) years or less
- Budget line items are justified in the Project narrative

Anticipated Outputs and Outcomes (0 – 20 points)

- Clear Project goals and measurable objectives are identified
- The application outlines a comprehensive strategy to meet USEPA's 9 element watershed-based plan
- The application demonstrates a thorough plan to inventory watershed resources

- The application includes an inclusive plan for the incorporation of public participation into the planning process
- Project will help improve capacity of local, State, and/or federal partners to control NPS pollution

Cost Effectiveness (0 – 10 points)

- Project's components and/or activities are cost-effective and/or comparable to other watershed-based planning projects
- Budget is detailed and clearly presented
- Project costs are limited to eligible components and activities
- Project leverages other funding sources

Addresses Need and Environmental Significance (0 – 20 points)

- The Project is a component of a larger water quality improvement strategy
- The Project will develop a WBP for an impaired waterbody/waterbodies
- Proposed approach/actions/activities are appropriate or technically/scientifically sound for NPS pollution control

Financial Integrity (0 – 10 points)

- Applicant has the financial ability to complete the Project

Programmatic Capability, Technical Experience and Qualifications (0 – 10 points)

- Applicant, or its consultant or partner, can successfully manage and complete the Project
- Applicant, or its consultant or partner, has strong staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the intent of the NOFO

Minimum Cut Score. Application points for the Tier 1 criterion listed above will be summed to arrive at a preliminary composite average score. A total of 100 points is possible. A minimum cut score of 60 will be used to determine if points for the additional Tier 2 criterion listed below will be applied. Applications that score ≤59 will not be given any additional Tier 2 points for the criterion listed below.

Tier 2

Relationship to Illinois EPA Priority Watersheds. (Point Range 0, 5, or 10) Priority will be given to those projects that are located within Illinois EPA [Priority Watersheds](#) for NPS planning. Illinois has 51 basins; all 51 basins will be a priority for watershed-based planning or plan implementation at least once every five years. Each year, a subset (8 – 11) of the basins will be a priority for planning. Waterbody segments, except for main-stem waters, that are not attaining their designated water quality uses due to NPS pollution impairments are the priority waterbodies within the priority watersheds. The main-stem waterbodies have greater priority once NPS components of a WBP for their headwater areas have been developed and implemented. The 10 to 12-digit hydrologic units (HUC) that contain these impaired waterbody segments are the priority watershed. A higher priority for assistance will be given to those watersheds that have multiple NPS impaired waterbody segments. Priority will also be given to those projects that are located within a NPS Priority Watershed to Reduce Nutrient Loss. [Click here](#) to see a set of maps that depict the 5-year planning and implementation priority watershed rotation and the priority watersheds for nutrient reduction. Applications that have no relationship to and are not located within a Priority Watershed will earn 0.0 points, while those with eligible projects in areas partially located in a Priority Watershed will earn 5 points. Those that have eligible projects that are entirely located in a Priority Watershed will earn 10 points.

Relationship to Illinois EPA Environmental Justice Areas (Point Range 0, 5, or 10)

Priority will be given to those projects that are located within an Illinois EPA Environmental Justice Area. "Environmental Justice" is based on the principle that all people should be protected from environmental pollution and have the right to a clean and healthy environment. Environmental Justice is the protection of the health of the people of Illinois and its environment, equity in the administration of the State's environmental programs, and the provision of adequate opportunities for meaningful involvement of all people with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Applications that do not include an Environmental Justice Area will earn 0 points, while those with project areas that are partially covered by an Environmental Justice Area earn 5 points. Those projects that are entirely covered by an Environmental Justice Area(s) earn 10 points.

Relationship to an approved TMDL. (Point Range 0, 5, or 10) Priority will be given to those projects located within an Illinois EPA approved TMDL. Applications that have no relationship to and are not located within an approved TMDL Implementation Plan earn 0 points, while those with eligible projects in areas that are partially covered by an approved TMDL Implementation Plan will earn 5 points. Those with eligible projects that are entirely located within an approved TMDL Implementation Plan earn 10 points.



Review and Selection Process

The complete applications shall be reviewed by an Evaluation Panel that is composed of Illinois EPA, Bureau of Water (BOW), Watershed Management Section (WMS), NPS Unit staff and other BOW staff, as available.

Each application shall be reviewed in-depth by the entire Evaluation Panel.

Illinois EPA's WMS shall solicit peer reviews on the applications from:

- within the Illinois EPA regional offices in which the project is located, and
- within Illinois EPA's Fiscal department for a fiscal and administrative review

The peer reviews shall not generate a numerical score but will provide information for the Evaluation Panel to consider while conducting the merit-based review.

The Evaluation Panel shall be convened to discuss the applications, peer review comments, and other relevant information. Using the merit-based review criteria, each member of the Evaluation Panel shall individually score each application on a scale of a possible 100 points independently of the whole panel. Each Evaluation Panel member shall then give the application a numeric score. These individual scores shall be shared with the whole Evaluation Panel and recorded on a summary score sheet that shows the comparative scores. Any significant or substantial variance between member's scores shall be reviewed and documented, including voluntary revision of individual scores.

Application points for the Tier 2 criterion will be added to the eligible applications to arrive at a preliminary composite average score. The final individual scores shall be converted into a composite average score for each application and ranked accordingly. Section 319 Grant Program funds will be awarded per the NOFO, starting with the highest ranked project funded first, followed in order by rank.

Additional review and selection processes are provided below.

- If the amount of available grant funding is not sufficient to fund the application in its entirety, the Evaluation Panel shall review the application to determine if a discrete portion or phase of the project meeting the mission of this NOFO can be funded. If the Evaluation Panel determines that it cannot fund the application in full or part, the next highest-ranked application will be reviewed for a discrete portion or phase to be

funded to meet the mission of the NOFO or the funds may be made available through a separate Notice of Funding Opportunity.

- If the Evaluation Panel determines that an applicant incorrectly calculated or indicated the project cost, match, and/or total funding request based on the applicable cost estimate, required match, or eligible costs, the application shall still be accepted and reviewed. If the applicant is awarded the grant, the Illinois EPA shall contact the applicant and request a decision from the applicant as to whether it will accept the award based on the Illinois EPA's determination of the project cost, applicant match, and/or total funding requested.

Illinois EPA's NPS Unit shall present a summary of all the applications received to the Chief of the Bureau of Water and the Director of the Illinois EPA. This summary shall include confirmation that the NOFO was followed and the findings and recommendations of the Evaluation Panel, including application rank and funding recommendation.

Based on eligibility and merit criteria, and the Evaluation Panel scoring, the Illinois' Section 319(h) Nonpoint Source Work Plan (Work Plan) will be prepared and submitted to U.S. EPA for approval. The Work Plan identifies the selected applications (Projects) proposed for funding by Illinois EPA. with a budget spreadsheet, a short narrative summary of each Project, and a copy of the selected Project applications.

U.S. EPA should issue comments to the Illinois EPA on the detailed Work Plan after a review period. Illinois EPA will then respond to U.S. EPA's comments to answer concerns and questions.

Once U.S. EPA has approved the Work Plan, Illinois EPA will apply to U.S. EPA for Section 319(h) funding to implement the Work Plan.

Following a decision of intent to award, the Illinois EPA is required by GATA to conduct a fiscal and administrative risk assessment and programmatic risk assessment of the applicant. Additional information may be required at that time from the successful applicant. To remain eligible for the award, the applicant must provide the requested information within the time specified by the Illinois EPA. The Fiscal and Administrative Risk Assessment Questionnaire is available on the GATA Portal. The Programmatic Risk Assessment, provided by Illinois EPA, evaluates the applicant's ability to successfully carry out the terms of the Section 319(h) Grant Program and assesses four risk categories: 1) quality of management systems and ability to meet the management standards; 2) history of performance; 3) reports and findings from audits performed on prior awards; and 4) the applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on a Grantee.

Appeal Process

An appeal process is available to applicants and other interested parties; however, appeals are limited to the Illinois EPA evaluation process. Evaluation scores may not be protested. An appeal must be submitted in writing to the following address: Illinois EPA, Attn: Section 319(h) Grant Program, Bureau of Water, 1021 N. Grand Avenue, Mail Code #15, P.O. Box 19276, Springfield, Illinois 62794-9276 and must be received within 14 calendar days after the date that the grant award notice has been published by the Illinois EPA on [Grants.Illinois.gov](https://www.grants.illinois.gov). The written appeal shall include at a minimum the following: the name and address of the appealing party, identification of the grant, and a statement of reasons for the appeal. Illinois EPA shall acknowledge receipt of an appeal within fourteen (14) calendar days from the date the appeal was received.

When an appeal is received, the execution of the grant agreement that Illinois EPA intends to make under this NOFO shall be stayed until the appeal is resolved.

Illinois EPA shall respond to the appeal within 60 days or supply a written explanation to the appealing party as to why additional time is required. The appealing party must supply any

additional information requested by Illinois EPA within the time period set in the request. The Director of the Illinois EPA may appoint one or more Appeal Review Officers (ARO) to consider the grant-related appeal and make a recommendation to the Director of the Illinois EPA or designee for resolution. The ARO shall make a recommendation to the Director of the Illinois EPA or designee as expeditiously as possible after receiving all relevant, requested information. In determining the appropriate recommendation, the ARO shall consider the integrity of the competitive grant process and the impact of the recommendation on the Illinois EPA. The Illinois EPA shall resolve the appeal by means of written determination, which shall include, but not be limited to: review of the appeal, appeal determination, and rationale for the determination.

Anticipated Announcement Dates

Anticipated Announcement and State Award Dates

By May 1, 2023, Illinois EPA expects to send written notice to each applicant whose application was not selected for inclusion in the Section 319 Grant Program Work Plan.

By June 30, 2023, the Illinois EPA expects to send the "Notice of State Award" to the successful grant applicant for signature. The Notice of State Award (NOSA) will specify the funding terms and specific conditions resulting from the pre-award risk assessments. The NOSA must be accepted and returned by an authorized representative of the grantee organization. The NOSA is not an authorization to begin performance or incur costs.

By July 30, 2023, Illinois EPA expects to send a grant agreement to the grant recipient for signature.

By September 30, 2023, Illinois EPA expects to provide a fully executed grant agreement to the grant recipient. A fully executed grant agreement is authorization for the grant recipient to begin work on the project.

Action by Illinois EPA	Target Dates
Notify unsuccessful applicants that their application was not selected for inclusion in the Section 319(h) Grant Program Work Plan.	May 1, 2023
Send a Notice of State Award to the selected applicant for acceptance.	June 30, 2023
Send a Grant Agreement to the selected applicant for signature.	July 30, 2023
Provide a fully executed Grant Agreement to the grantee.	September 30, 2023
The anticipated start date for approved Projects is September 30, 2023 .	

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